



TOWN OF

KENSINGTON

MARCH
2004
JOURNAL

Meeting Schedule

March 22, 7:00 p.m. Budget Meeting

March 24, 8:00 a.m. Sign Ordinance Workshop
For Information contact Louise Hamilton at 301-949-2424

March 29, 6:30 p.m. Budget Meeting

March 29, 7:30 p.m. Town Meeting
Introduction of Amendments to Sign Ordinance
Approval of Major Priorities for FY 2004-05 and Beyond

There will not be a Work Session in April
April 26, 7:30 p.m. Town Meeting

Town of Kensington American Red Cross Blood Drive

At Town Hall on Saturday March 20th from 9am to 3pm
For more information or to reserve a time please contact
Andrea Gill at 301-949-4030

Contact us at 3710 Mitchell Street, Kensington, MD 20895
Phone: 301-949-2424; Fax: 301-949-4925;
E-mail: mayor.council@tok.org; Web Site: www.tok.org

Maryland Tax Return 2003 Form 502/503

Please remember to write the Town of Kensington in the box marked city, town or taxing area. This will insure that a portion of your tax dollars will return to the Town.

For Your Information

Earth/Arbor Day Celebration Volunteers Needed

The Town of Kensington will celebrate Earth/Arbor Day on Sunday, April 25, 2004 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Free seedlings, a planting table, a film on the history of trees will be just a few of the activities. Please contact Louise Hamilton at 301-949-2424.

Tree Planting

Any resident who would like to have a tree planted on the Town of Kensington right of way in front of their property, please contact Louise Hamilton at 301-949-2424.

Kensington Parkwood Elementary School

To ensure there is adequate staffing for next fall, the Kensington Parkwood Elementary School is encouraging any prospective families to register their children as soon as possible. If you have any questions about the school or its programs you can either contact PTA President Susan Workman 301-770-1088 or Principal John Cechini at 301-571-6949.

SPRING CLEANING/BRUSH

PLEASE TRY TO DO YOUR SPRING CLEANING BEFORE APRIL. OUR TIPPING FEES ARE INCREASING EFFECTIVE APRIL 1ST. ALSO, PLEASE REMEMBER THAT BRUSH NEEDS TO BE BAGGED, CANNED, OR TIED.

Mayor's Report

Message from the Mayor

The Mayor attended the Annual Maryland Mayors Association Conference held in Annapolis in February. Workshops were held and a great deal of time spent with our legislators as a group and individually. The Mayors share concerns of municipal government and ask for support of our State Legislators during the legislative session.

The Montgomery County Chapter of MML held our annual meeting with County Executive Doug Duncan this month. The County Executive informed us of the Memorandum of Understanding being prepared for municipalities to sign with the County to allow county police cars to be used by county police officers hired by municipalities. The MOU came in and has been signed by the Mayor. This will enable the Town to hire off-duty county police officers to patrol our Town streets. An off-duty police officer hired by the Town will be able to give citations to individuals who are not

obeying Town laws on Town streets (this includes residents of the Town). The Council will discuss this issue further during work sessions.

Mayor Raufaste attended two State Senate Committee hearings this month in Annapolis to give testimony. She testified for Maryland Municipal League on HB710. This bill, if adopted, will help municipalities particularly in light of the continued cuts in Highway User Revenues received by local governments. This bill would use the Highway User Revenue formula to distribute an estimated 7.1 million dollars to municipalities annually.

The second hearing she testified on behalf of the Town was to extend a \$150,000 state grant that will be lost in June if not extended for another year. This grant is allocated to repairing the Town Hall Community Center façade, portions of the roof and some interior changes to offices and meeting rooms. This work could not start until an easement agreement was presented to the Town by Maryland Historic Trust. The Trust had some problems gathering all of the information needed and took longer than expected to execute.

Over the past month the Mayor has met with Montgomery County officials to discuss the cement plant site north of the train station. The County is still working on a land swap with the property owner and we hope to hear soon that an agreement has been signed.

We thank County Council Member Tom Perez for attending our Town Meeting in February. He answered many questions and offered to help us with traffic issues most important to the Town. The Mayor contacted Council Member Perez this week with a request to work on a joint effort to improve Summit Avenue between Knowles and Howard Avenues. The street needs to be repaired and have curb and gutter installed. She also requested that the County pave Howard Avenue west of Summit Avenue as we have had several complaints from citizens who travel to the businesses in that area.

Council Reports

Council Member Carr

Traffic

- Council member Carr worked with Montgomery County Police and the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department to document crashes that occurred in 2003.
- Thanks to Dustin Finney and others on the traffic advisory committee for their work analyzing and recommending pedestrian safety improvements on Plyers Mill Road. The Council has concurred to hire a traffic engineer to build on their work and recommend additional pedestrian safety and traffic calming measures on Plyers Mill Road.
- The next Traffic Advisory Committee meeting is set for Wednesday, March 17th at 7pm in the council room at Town Hall.

Lighting

- Council Member Carr toured the streets of Kensington at night with his trusty digital camera in order to document poor lighting practices in our commercial areas. He

completed a draft lighting ordinance and submitted it to the Mayor and Council for review.

- He worked with our Director of Operations to have Pepco repair many streetlights in Town that were dim or burned out.

Miscellaneous

- After researching utility undergrounding, he drafted a letter to Pepco from the Town to look at the feasibility of burying power lines in key locations.
- He attended a training seminar about municipal responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

As always, please contact me any time you have an idea, question or concern. phone: 946-4956. e-mail: acarr@aol.com

Building Permits Issued

Swimming pool at 10213 Montgomery Avenue

Town of Kensington

Major Priorities for FY 2004-05 and Beyond

Draft for Discussion and Approval at March Town Meeting

Whereas the Town Government is committed to enhancing the “quality of life” in Kensington;

Whereas “quality of life” issues include **community spirit and pride** whereby we build a stronger sense of community by continuing to promote community events, renovating Town Hall into a community center, and continuing to conduct open and participatory municipal government;

Whereas “quality of life” issues affect both our **residential and commercial** communities which collectively make up and contribute to our Town, and that the success of each sector is interdependent;

Whereas “quality of life” issues include the **revitalization and beautification** of our Town whereby residential and commercial public spaces are improved and properly maintained, parks and recreational areas are properly care for, and trees, open spaces, and Kensington’s historical features are celebrated and preserved;

Whereas “quality of life” issues include maintaining a **safe** community, whereby pedestrians (children, seniors and persons with disabilities) can move securely and freely through our residential and commercial areas, properties are properly maintained, and traffic restrictions and Town Codes are enforced;

Whereas, major municipal projects, goals and objectives must be planned with strict fiscal responsibility and adherence to a balanced budget;

Whereas, major municipal projects, goals and objectives can span many years from time of inception to final completion, recognizing that Mayors and Councils change over time; therefore be it

Resolved, that this Mayor and Council hereby adopt the following “Major Priorities for FY 2004-05 and Beyond” for reference by future Mayors and Councils so as to keep long-term projects moving and make today’s visions become tomorrow’s reality:

Infrastructure and Town Operations

Planning and Zoning

- A. Review and update sector plan
- B. Continue support for historic district
 - 1. Support legacy open space program and inclusion of Circle Manor in that program
 - 2. Support expansion of historic district to include adjacent areas that meet county guidelines (per Vision of Kensington recommendations)

Renovation of Town Hall

- A. Improve energy efficiency of the entire building including necessary heating, ventilation and air conditioning upgrades
- B. Renovate offices per Armory plan
- C. Renovate ground floor meeting spaces and bathroom

Streets and Sidewalks

- A. Develop guidelines for and continue regular inspection, maintenance schedule of Town streets
- B. Develop guidelines for and continue regular inspection, maintenance and repair schedule of Town sidewalks
- C. Develop guidelines to prioritize sidewalk and pedestrian capital improvements

Storm Drains

- A. Seek grants to adhere to federal regulations regarding stormwater management
- B. Update where necessary
- C. Seek county takeover of ownership and maintenance of storm sewers
- D. Support regional efforts to maintain and improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay

Town Charter and Code

- A. Adopt and implement lighting Ordinance
- B. Implement sign ordinance
- C. Review and revise Code

- D. Seek professional guidance to review current form of government

Website

- A. Update and maintain a website that is content-rich and interactive that allows residents to feel more connected to the operations of their Town Government.

Recreation and Community Spirit

Parks

- A. Develop regular maintenance schedule for all playground equipment
- B. Maintain regular mowing and weeding schedule
- C. Continue to annually refresh all mulched areas

Town Hall/Community Center

- A. Purchase window coverings for drill hall to reduce noise/light
- B. Replace stage curtain
- C. Other renovations as necessary

HOC

- A. Work with the County to find more appropriate home for the HOC and identify funding to transform building into recreation center

Kensington Cabin

- A. Work with County on funding building renovations
- B. Perform renovations

Municipal Events

- A. Continue support for annual events including: Town Labor Day Parade and Picnic
- B. Provide support for volunteers in scheduling special events such as summer concert series in Howard Avenue Park, films in the drill hall during the winter season, and special talks from time to time

Commercial Revitalization

Safeway

- A. Support a renovated Safeway

Gould Property

- A. Support commercial development
- B. Support additional parking for both commercial and commuters

Demographics Study and Report

- A. Provide support for research and writing and demographic report for use in attracting new businesses to Town
- B. Consider addition of a commercial revitalization professional.

2000 Kensington Concept Plan

- A. Support implementation of remaining recommendations

Traffic, Pedestrian and Transportation

Connecticut Avenue

- A. Continue to work with SHA and County on safety, speeding and gridlock issues; Follow 5 and 10 year plan (2000 Kensington Concept Plan, Commercial Revitalization Study and Vision of Kensington used for guidance)
- B. Continue to work with SHA and County on: removing traffic signs from sidewalks, boldly striping crosswalks, improving safety at Baltimore and Connecticut, and improving pedestrian crossings throughout Town

Town “Hot Spots”

- A. Work with traffic engineer in examining and implementing, if appropriate, safety measures at “hot spots” throughout Town
- B. Rotate speed monitoring device

Transportation

- A. Support County efforts to review optimum bus stop and bus shelter placements
- B. Support Montgomery County Chapter of the Maryland Municipal League efforts to enhance MARC train service
- C. Seek a grade separated or other safe crossing of the CSX railroad tracks near the train station
- D. Continue to explore the feasibility of designating biking areas in Town

Town Meeting

February 23, 2004

Mayor Raufaste called the Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with Council Members Carr, Cowan, Pfautz, and Timlin, Director of Operations Furman, and Clerk-Treasurer Engels present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A Moment of Silence was observed for Nelson P. Hart, a former Mayor of the Town, who recently passed away.

The Minutes from February 2, 2004 were reviewed and corrected.

The March and April meeting dates were set as follows: March 22 at 7:00 p.m. Budget Meeting; March 29 at 6:30 p.m. Budget Meeting; March 29 at 7:30 p.m. Town Meeting; April 12 at 7:00 p.m. Work Session; and April 26 at 7:30 p.m. Town Meeting. Subsequently the April 12th Work Session was cancelled.

The constant yield tax rate was discussed and will be reviewed further during the budget discussion.

The Mayor and Council discussed the draft of the Major Priorities for FY 2004-05 and Beyond and made revisions. The draft will be discussed and revised further to be adopted at the March Town Meeting.

The project list was reviewed and updated. The Council will review the first draft of a lighting ordinance at the next Work Session. The Council concurred to have the traffic engineer look at traffic calming measures for Plyers Mill Road and make recommendations at the next Work Session. The Mayor will contact SHA to study Metropolitan Avenue for a stop sign at St. Paul going west in response to a resident's request.

The Mayor and Council reviewed and agreed on the Top Ten Traffic Issues to be sent to County Council Member Tom Perez per his request.

The Mayor informed the Council of complaints received regarding the enforcement of the snow ordinance along the State Highway's in Town. The Mayor and Council will review the current snow ordinance.

Council Member Carr presented a draft letter to the Council to send to Pepco regarding support for undergrounding of utilities on Armory, Knowles, and part of Connecticut Avenue. The Council will review the letter.

The Mayor and Council discussed the upcoming sign workshop, enforcement of the sign ordinance and adding a variance procedure.

The monthly correspondence was reviewed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

Council Actions

Council Member Pfautz moved to approve the minutes for February 2, 2004 as published in the February Journal with the following paragraph being amended to read as follows:

The Mayor and Council discussed future priorities for the Town including demographic and market studies for commercial revitalization, additional commercial parking, the use of TEA-21 funds, **hiring of a marketing development manager**, and continuing renovation of Town Hall. Council Members Carr and Pfautz will draft a list of major priorities for Council review. **Council Member Carr will investigate the possibility of a grant application for street sweeper/stormwater improvements.**

Council Member Carr seconded and it passed unanimously.

Work Session of Mayor & Council

March 1, 2004

The Work Session commenced at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Raufaste, Council Members Carr, Cowan, Pfautz, and Timlin, Director of Operations Furman, Code Enforcement Officer Hamilton, and Clerk-Treasurer Engels were present and the following issues were addressed:

Gail Tait-Nouri from the County's Department of Public Works and Transportation was present to discuss ways to provide a bike path from Beach Drive through the Town. The Council made several suggestions for Ms. Nouri's consideration including placing a directional and mileage sign at Beach Drive and Kensington Parkway and Kensington Parkway and Frederick Avenue; studying feasibility of a safe crossing at the train tracks to St. Paul, studying feasibility of a safe crossing at Plyers Mill/Metropolitan and Connecticut Avenue and perhaps further down at Washington Street and Connecticut Avenue; and signage where necessary on these north and west portions of a bike route. Ms. Nouri will report back to the Council with a draft plan when it is completed.

Bill Barron from MNCPPC was present and discussed the master plan and sectional map amendment process for the Town to begin in the fall of 2004 and to be completed in 2007. He also explained that an overlay zone is a zone that is more permissive or restrictive than the base zone it is added to and usually implemented after the master plan.

The Code Enforcement Action List was reviewed.

Enforcement of the sign ordinance was discussed. The sign ordinance will be amended to clarify which signs are allowed and to add a variance procedure. These amendments will be introduced at the March Town Meeting and adopted at the April Town Meeting.

The list of Major Priorities for FY 2004-05 and beyond will be further refined and adopted at the March Town Meeting (draft included in this Journal).

Council Member Carr will revise and shorten the letter to Pepco regarding Town support for undergrounding utilities.

The Council reviewed the first draft of a lighting ordinance. Further revisions will be made (i.e. to clarify enforcement mechanism and more clearly state new restrictions) and the draft ordinance will be discussed at later date. In the interim, the Mayor will request certain businesses to correct the glare from their lights.

The Minutes from February 23, 2004 were reviewed and corrected.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

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